

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----052173 111245Z /45

P 111151Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3118
INFO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 AMMAN 6517

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID, PBOR, JO, IS, US
SUBJECT: ISRAELI PRELIMINARY RESPONSE TO MAQARIN WORKING PAPER

REF: TEL AVIV 6684 AND PREVIOUS

1. WE WERE OF COURSE INTERESTED IN ALON'S PRE-
LIMINARY REACTION TO DRAFT WORKING PAPER AND
WOULD LIKE TO PROVIDE FOLLOWING COMMENTS.

2. WE ARE PLEASED TO HEAR THAT TECHNICAL DATA
HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM ISRAELIS ON TRIANGLE
AND PUMPING. AS SOON AS TRANSLATIONS RECEIVED
HERE, WE WILL BE IN BETTER POSITION TO PROVIDE
TECHNICAL COMMENT, PARTICULARLY ON ISRAELI
CURRENT INSISTENCE THAT PROVISION FOR TRIANGLE
SHOULD CENTER ON 40 MCM INSTEAD OF 25 MCM.
WHILE WE REALIZE THAT IT WAS PROBABLY TOO MUCH TO
ASK TO HAVE CONSIDERED PAST CONVERSATIONS AS
HAVING SETTLED THE ISSUE ON THE BASIS OF 25 MCM
PLUS PUMPING THE FLOOD WATER (WHICH OVER A PERIOD
OF YEARS, GIVEN ADEQUATE PUMPING CAPACITY AND
TIBERIAS STORAGE, WOULD HAVE ASSURED ISRAEL

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WELL IN EXCESS OF 40 MCM), THIS WILL BE KEY ISSUE
FOR JORDAN FOR THE FUTURE AND CONSEQUENTLY FOR
US ALSO. THE 25 MCM FIGURE REPRESENTS A SERIOUS
CONCESSION BY JORDAN FROM 17 MCM AND HAPPENS ALSO
TO BE THE BEST FIGURE AVAILABLE FROM JOHNSON PLAN.
TO HAVE ISRAELIS POCKET THAT CONCESSION PLUS THE
USE OF FLOOD WATER FOR ALMOST THE INDEFINITE

FUTURE, SEEMS TO INDICATE AN ELEGANT LACK OF PERSPECTIVE AND IN THE LAST ANALYSIS, WE, AS PERFORMERS OF A GOOD OFFICES ROLE AND AS KEY DONORS WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO MAKE OUR OWN VIEWS CLEAR TO BOTH SIDES. BEFORE WE DO THAT HOWEVER, WE WILL HAVE TO REVIEW THE ISRAELI TECHNICAL DATA. I WILL LOOK FORWARD TO DISCUSSING THIS IN WASHINGTON AND HOPE THAT AN OVERLAP WITH AMBASSADOR LEWIS CAN BE WORKED OUT FOR THIS PURPOSE (CURRENTLY I PLAN TO ARRIVE ON SEPTEMBER 23).

3. ON WEIR AT ADASIYE, WE HAVE ALWAYS ASSUMED THERE WOULD BE AN AGREEMENT ON RELEASES. POSSIBILITY OF A JOINT WATER MASTER HAS BEEN DISCUSSED INFORMALLY HERE, BUT WE DO NOT HAVE JORDANIAN REACTION OFFICIALLY. WE ASSUME THIS DETAIL COULD BE WORKED OUT.

4. WE ASSUME THAT REVIEW OF WATER NEEDS OF WEST BANK, IN ACCORD WITH THE CURRENT DRAFT WORKING PAPER, IS BEING "INITIATED" JOINTLY BY ISRAEL AND JORDAN, ALTHOUGH IDEA OF OFFICIAL COOPERATION OBVIOUSLY TOUCHES ON DELICATE SENSITIVITIES HERE, EVEN WHEN USING U.S. GOOD OFFICES.

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5. KEY QUESTION OF WATER CONVEYANCE TO WEST BANK, AS RAISED BY ISRAELIS ALSO, IS OBVIOUSLY OF SERIOUS POLITICAL IMPORTANCE. STUDIES OF WATER NEEDS SHOULD LOGICALLY PRECEDE OR GO AHEAD IN TANDEM WITH STUDIES AND PLANS FOR HOW TO GET THE WATER TO WHERE IT IS NEEDED. WE BELIEVE GOJ MIGHT BE PERSUADED TO LOOK AT CONVEYANCE QUESTION AND, IF WE PAY FOR IT, ACTUALLY TO DESIGN THE CONVEYANCE. THIS COULD, ALL TECHNICAL PROBLEMS BEING SOLVED, GO AHEAD ALONG WITH CONSTRUCTION OF ADASIYE WEIR. EVEN A HYPOTHETICAL CONSTRUCTION TIMETABLE MIGHT BE INCLUDED, BUT THE KEY ISSUE IS THAT JORDAN WILL NOT PROVIDE WATER TO WEST BANK WITHOUT SOME ASSURANCE ON THE FUTURE POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP OF THE WEST BANK ACCEPTABLE GENERALLY TO IT AND/OR THE ARAB WORLD.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3119
INFO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 AMMAN 6517

EXDIS

6. A PERMANENT JOINT COMMISSION IS OUT OF THE QUESTION, BUT ARRANGEMENTS WHERE BOTH SIDES MEET UNDER THIRD PARTY AUSPICES (SIMILAR TO PRESENT UN-SPONSORED MEETINGS ON BRIDGE AND ARMISTICE LINE ARRANGEMENTS) TO DISCUSS AND WORK OUT IMPLEMENTATION IS PROBABLY POSSIBLE.

7. A WRITTEN, SIGNED AGREEMENT IS NOT A POSSIBILITY NOW IN THE ABSENCE OF A PEACE SETTLEMENT.

8. DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS IS A VERY TRICKY ISSUE. WE SERIOUSLY DOUBT WHETHER ISRAELIS COULD KEEP SUCH TALKS PRIVATE FOR VERY LONG. THE MOST WE COULD EXPECT IS THE POSSIBILITY OF SOME SORT OF PROXIMITY TALKS WITH U.S. DEVELOPING INTO A QUIET ARRANGEMENTS, OVER TIME, WHERE PARTIES MIGHT MEET TOGETHER WITH U.S. PRESENT. IF THIS WOULD SATISFY ISRAELI REQUIREMENT, IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO WORK OUT SOMETHING. IN VIEW OF THE NEAR INEVITABILITY OF ISRAELI LEAKS ON SUCH AN ISSUE, U.S. (OR OTHER THIRD-PARTY PRESENCE) WOULD BE THE MINIMUM REQUIRED TO PROVIDE A SUITABLE
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EXPLANATION TO ARAB WORLD OF WHAT JORDAN WAS DOING. EVEN THEN THIS WOULD NOT BE AN EASY POSITION TO SELL HERE.

9. COMMENT: THE FOLLOWING GENERAL COMMENT APPLIES TO THIS ISSUE AS WE SEE IT NOW. WE ASSUME THE ATTACHMENT OF THESE ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS OF A POLITICAL OR SEMI-POLITICAL CHARACTER REPRESENTS THE BEGIN GOVERNMENT'S REACTION TO THIS ISSUE AND DOES ADD WHAT AMOUNTS TO SOME DIFFICULT POTENTIAL ROAD BLOCKS. IN THE LONG RUN, OUR OWN VIEWS MAY WELL BE REQUIRED TO BE OFFERED TO FIND A WAY OUT OF WHATEVER IMPASSES MAY DEVELOP. WE HAVE OFFERED THE ABOVE SUGGESTIONS BELIEVING THAT THEY CAN HELP GUIDE US AROUND AND THROUGH MANY OF THE POINTS WHICH ALON RAISED. BEFORE GOING FURTHER, WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD EXAMINE AND REVIEW THE ISRAELI TECHNICAL DATA AND DISCUSS IT WITH THE JORDANIANS AND THEN DISCUSS THE QUESTION IN WASHINGTON, IN LIGHT OF COURSE OF ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS TEL AVIV HAS TO OFFER. IT IS CRUCIAL TO OUR TIMING TO RECEIVE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THE ISRAELI MAPS AND TECHNICAL DATA.

10. FOR TEL AVIV: PLEASE INFORM US AS SOON AS DATA TRANSLATED. WE WILL ARRANGE FOR SPECIAL COURIER EXCHANGE AT BRIDGE TO RECEIVE DATA AND HOPE THEREBY TO REDUCE TRANSMISSION TIME. PICKERING

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